

Comments on the Bay Area to Central Valley Program EIS/EIR
My name is Walter Strakosch and I am a resident of Mill Valley.

There are a number of issues to be considered in evaluating the Altamont (AP) vs. the Pacheco Pass (PP) routings, some of which I will discuss later, but initially there is the cost factor. Where 10 years ago the project had started out with a \$18 Billion dollar (total project) price tag the estimated costs are now about twice that. With regard to the costs of the Bay Area to Valley segment the Program EIS/EIR does give an analysis of the costs, but it left me with some questions that the HSR Office was unable to answer. I then was referred to the lead on the DEIS/DEIR at P-B (Dave Manson) but he is on vacation in France and hopefully enjoying their high-speed trains. I then decided to work with what I had. *WHICH WAS THE PROGRAM EIS/EIR*

PHS1-1

In any event this is my take: Table S 5-1 in the Program EIS/EIR shows comprehensive numbers (mileage, costs, ridership, etc.) on many alternate routings between the Valley and the Bay Area. There are 11 alternates via the AP and 6 via the PP. What I have tried to do is analyze only two (it gets to complicated to go beyond that): the base route via Pacheco and, in my judgment, the best base route via the AP.

What I think is important here is that the project has gotten so ^{INVOLVED} ~~mucked up~~ in the past five years that unless you get something (anything) built you may end up getting nothing built, but get a sensible segment built and operating and the rest will come very quickly—***HSR is that good, I guarantee it.***

PHS1-2

Following that line of reasoning we should do exactly what the French did in 1981 on their initial TGV Line (and I rode it 10 days after it opened) between Paris and Lyon. They built the majority of the line between the two cities, but used the existing rail to enter both Lyon and Paris. They completed the final segments at a later time.

Now this becomes important and is where the entire Caltrain Line plays a part in getting the line opened sooner and, initially keeping the costs down.

This then takes us to the base case scenario of the PP vs. the AP. First the base case for the PP with the cost figures as shown in the Summary Table (S. 5-1) and further detailed in Table 4.2-3. It would seem that the mileage should be measured from where the line leaves the SJV (remember the system *is* going all the way to Sacramento) or about 10 miles below Merced, but it doesn't. It shows as 267.53 ~~miles~~ (And this is where I couldn't get an

PHS1-3

THIS MILEAGE

answer.), whereas the mileage is closer to 150 miles to San Jose and 200 to San Francisco. Anyway at a cost of \$46,303,853 a mile (Table 4.2-3), the 150 miles from the Valley to SJ is \$6,946,000,000.

PHS1-3
Cont.

My base AP routing for the same strange reason as shown in Table 4.2-3 has a mileage shown as 213.30 whereas the actual mileage from the Valley connection to the Caltrain track (via a rebuilt Dumbarton Bridge) is about 83 miles at a cost of \$58,912,092 per mile the total cost is \$4,831,000,000.

Therefore if you compare the cost of the PP (Valley to SJ) \$6,946,000,000 to the AP (Valley to a Caltrain connection) \$4,831,000,000, the AP is about \$2,000,000,000 cheaper and it is not necessary to build about 70 miles of redundant double track. *which is what the AP will require*

There are other factors favoring the AP as well. The largest travel market in the State (2000 Business Plan) is between the SJV and other major metro areas. The third largest travel market in the State is between Sacramento and San Francisco. The AP routing allows you to keep Merced, Modesto and Stockton on a direct line to SF. The PP routing does not. It also favors the Sac. to SF market because it is foolish, once the Sacramento extension is built, to think that people will travel almost half-way to Los Angeles to travel between these two cities. *AP*

PHS1-4

In addition you have two existing rail Row's in the Altamont Pass. One is the operating UP Line which may, or may not be, for sale at the right price and the other is an abandoned, I believe, ROW of the Southern Pacific. My guess is that part, if not all, of one or the other could be rebuilt to HSR standards and let us not forget how much easier it might be to obtain environmental clearance.

The issue could have been decided several years ago but politics being politics, and sometimes wrongly used, it's never that simple. The original recommendation by the HSRC recommended the AP but it was mysteriously left out of the 2000 Business Plan, but because of overwhelming objections it had to be restudied. The problem is the HSRA could have been \$1.7 million dollars to spend on other issues and two years ahead if wasn't necessary to have to this ~~issue~~ all over again.

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